

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USNATO
USNMR SHAPE BE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 1232

E.O. 11652: GDS,
TAGS: PARM, NATO, SALT, MBFR, NO
SUBJECT: RB/ER: STORTING FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT

REFS: (A) OSLO 0614 (NOTAL) (B) USNATO 01899

1. ON MARCH 5, THE NORWEGIAN STORTING'S FOREIGN AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE RELEASED ITS ANNUAL REPORT ON NORWEGIAN DISARMAMENT
POLICY. THE REPORT STATES, INTER ALIA, THAT NORWAY CAN CONTRIBUTE
TO POLITICAL INITIATIVES TO PREVENT THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT
AND SPREAD OF WEAPONS LIKE THE NEUTRON BOMB AND THE SOVIET
MEDIUM DISTANCE ROCKETS. THE REPORT WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY
THE COMMITTEE.

2. COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND LABOR PARTY CHAIRMAN REIULF STEEN
COMMENTED AFTER THE REPORT WAS RELEASED THAT THE TIME
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HAS COME FOR NORWAY TO TAKE CONCRETE STEPS TO HASTEN INTERNATIONAL
NEGOTIATIONS WHICH CAN PREVENT THE US NEUTRON BOMB FROM
BEING DEVELOPED AND DEPLOYED. STEEN, FOR EXAMPLE, WHO HAS
ALREADY DEVELOPED HIGH EXPECTATIONS CONCERNING THE UN'S
SSOD, IS NOW TALKING ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF ANTI-RB/ER
MOVES AT MAY'S SPECIAL SESSION OF UNGA.

3. KAI LIE, MFA DIRECTOR FOR ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT, TOLD EMBOFF IN LAST FEW DAYS THAT NORWEGIAN REPLY TO BREZHNEV LETTER WOULD BE SENT FORTH IN THE NEXT TWO WEEKS, AND THAT THE REPLY WOULD BE ALONG THE LINES OF THE DANISH RESPONSE (REF B). LIKE THE DANES, THE NORWEGIANS WOULD RE-EMPHASIZE (A) NORWEGIAN POLICY ON PLACING NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON NORWEGIAN SOIL IN PEACETIME; (B) A DESIRE TO HALT THE SPIRALING ARMS RACE; AND (C) THE DEFENSIVE NATURE OF THE NATO ALLIANCE.

4. JUDGING FROM EDITORIAL COMMENT IN LEADING NEWSPAPERS HERE, ALL OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES SHARE THE SENTIMENTS ABOUT RB/ER EXPRESSED IN THE STORTING FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT ON DISARMAMENT. IN THE LAST WEEK, OSLO DAILY "DAGBLADET", GENERALLY SUPPORTIVE OF THE SMALL LIBERAL PARTY, SUGGESTED EDITORIALY THAT PM NORDLI SHOULD REPLY TO BREZHNEV THAT NORWAY WILL RECOMMEND THAT RB/ER NOT BE PRODUCED AND NOT BE STATIONED IN EUROPE. "VAARTLAND", CHRISTIAN PEOPLES' PARTY DAILY, URGED PRESIDENT CARTER TO STOP ALL DEVELOPMENT WORK ON RB/ER. SIMILAR COMMENTS WERE MADE EARLIER IN OSLO'S OTHER LEADING NEWSPAPERS (REF A).

5. COMMENT: THE GON'S STRATEGY FOR DEALING WITH THE RB/ER WEAPON HAS BEEN BASED ON TWO POINTS: FIRST, THAT NORWAY WOULD AVOID BEING ISOLATED FROM HER ALLIES ON THE ISSUE, NOT CONFIDENTIAL

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TAKING THE LEAD NOR BEING FAR BEHIND THEM IN THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE WEAPON; AND SECOND, THAT THE ALLIANCE AND THE US WOULD REACH A DECISION ON THE WEAPON BEFORE LOCAL POLITICAL PRESSURES BECAME SO STRONG THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD TO ABANDON ITS MODERATELY POSITIVE ATTITUDE ON THE RB/ER. AS WE READ THE SITUATION, DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PAST TWO WEEKS HAVE BEGUN TO UNDERMINE THIS STRATEGY. THE DUTCH PARLIAMENTARY DECISION ON THE WEAPON HAS CALLED INTO QUESTION ALLIANCE COHESION ON THE ISSUE, WHICH AT ONCE

MAKES IT HARDER FOR OUR FRIENDS INSIDE THE GON TO HOLD TO THEIR MODERATE POSITION WHILE ALSO INSPIRING THE WEAPON'S OPPONENTS ON THE OUTSIDE TO STEP UP THEIR ANTI-RB/ER CAMPAIGN. THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT A DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSENSUS IS DEVELOPING WHICH COULD SHIFT THE GON AWAY FROM ITS EARLIER STANCE, DESPITE THAT FACT THAT EVERYONE UNDERSTANDS THAT THE WEAPONS WOULD NOT BE DEPLOYED IN NORWAY. AT A MINIMUM, THE GON'S JOB WILL BE MORE DELICATE IF AND WHEN THE US SHOULD DECIDE TO GO AHEAD WITH THE WEAPON.
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